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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY East Germany

DATE DISTR. 12 May 1953

SUBJECT Change in the Planned Reorganization of the
Optical Industry

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1. Plans to make VEB Carl Zeiss, Jena, a so-called leading enterprise (Leitbetrieb) of the optical industry in East Germany were cancelled in early March 1953; it was believed that too many administrative difficulties would result from such a reorganization. Cancellation of the Leitbetrieb reorganization is thought to apply to the entire VVB group for which it was originally scheduled.
2. The enterprises affiliated with the Peoples' owned optical industry are to remain under the authority of the Ministry for General Machine Construction but they will be controlled by the Land Districts (Landesbezirke). Smaller works, which are geographically close together, will be combined in large regional administrative units under the control of the Land Districts.
3. As now planned, those Zeiss works in Weimar, Saalfeld, and other places will each be assigned a **works director**. The directors of the non-Jena **works** will be under the authority of Zeiss **director**, Hugo Schrade, who is to be directly responsible to the Ministry.
4. In February 1953, Zeiss was ordered to transfer its production of film projectors to the former Rheinmetall Works in Sommerda, which makes office equipment and computing machines. The shift was designed to eliminate possible extensive unemployment at Sommerda. The Zeiss Direction opposed the Ministry plan and suggested the transfer to Sommerda of A-1 aerial trainer production rather than that of film projectors. In March 1953 the Ministry withdrew its order. Transfer of A-1 production to Sommerda is not contemplated.

25X1A

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440